

NEW JERSEY  
Feb. 21, 1861

DRAWER 5 PRE-INAUGURAL

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# Pre-Inaugural Speeches of Abraham Lincoln, 1861

New Jersey  
Feb. 21, 1861

Excerpts from newspapers and other  
sources

From the files of the  
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8733 1861  
PRES. LINCOLN'S TOUR. *New York, Feb. 20.*  
Before leaving City Hall this forenoon, Mr. Lincoln appeared on the balcony, and in response to loud calls said: "Friends, I do not appear for the purpose of making a speech. I design to make no speech; I came merely to see you and to allow you to see me; I have to say to you, as I have said frequently to persons on my journey, that in the sight I suppose I have the best of the bargain. Assuming that you are all for the Constitution, the Union (cheers), and the perpetual liberties of this people, I bid you farewell."

On his return to the Astor House, Mr. Lincoln had interviews with Hamilton Fish, Col. Fremont, and about one hundred others.

Mr. Lincoln visited Barnum's Museum in the afternoon and tonight attended the opera. He declined an invitation to visit Brooklyn. He leaves at a quarter past eight tomorrow morning, stopping at Jersey City, Newark and Trenton, en route to Philadelphia.

Mr. Lincoln will be surrounded at midnight tonight, at the Astor House.

*Newark, N. J., 20th.* Villainous posters were displayed today, calling upon the workmen to attend at the depot upon Mr. Lincoln's arrival, and demonstrate their differences with him. The Republicans have resolved to form a cavalcade and escort the President-elect through the city.

## PROGRESS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL PARTY.

Great Receptions at Trenton, Philadelphia and Harrisburg.

Patriotic Speeches by Mr. Lincoln.

CEREMONIES AT INDEPENDENCE HALL.

MR. LINCOLN RAISES THE NATIONAL FLAG.

*Trenton, N. J., 21st.* A special train with Mr. Lincoln and party on board, arrived at 12 o'clock. An immense crowd assembled at the depot, who heartily welcomed them. Mayor Mills extended a welcome and introduced Mr. Lincoln to the members of the City Government. The party were then taken in carriages to the State House, under the escort of one hundred horsemen, the City Blues of Patterson, and the German Rifles of Trenton.

Mr. Lincoln was welcomed by the President of the Senate, and replied as follows:

Mr. President and gentlemen of the Senate of the State of New Jersey: I am very grateful to you for the honorable reception of which I have been the object. I cannot but remember the place that New Jersey holds in our early history. In the early revolutionary struggle, few of the States among the old thirteen had more of the battle-fields of the country within their limits than old New Jersey. May I be pardoned if, on this occasion, I mention that away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, such an one as few of the younger members have ever seen, "Greene's Life of Washington."

I remember that in all the accounts there given of the battle fields and struggles for the liberty of the country, none fixed themselves upon my imagination as the struggle here at Trenton, New Jersey. The crossing of the river, the contest with the Hessians and the great hardships endured at that time, all fixed themselves upon my memory more than any single Revolutionary event; and you all know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than any others. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that these men struggled for.

I am exceedingly anxious for that thing which was then struggled for, that something even more than national independence, that something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world for all time to come—I am exceedingly anxious that the Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people, shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea of which that struggle was made; and I shall be most happy indeed if I shall be an humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty for perpetuating the object of that great struggle.

You give me this reception, as I understand, without distinction of party. I learn that this body is composed of a majority of gentlemen, who, in the exertion of their best judgment in the choice of a Chief Magistrate, did not think I was the man. I understand, nevertheless, that they come forward here to greet me as the constitutional President of the United States, as citizens of the United States to a man who, for the time being, is the representative man of the nation. As such I accept this reception more gratefully than I could do did I believe it was extended to me as an individual.

His speech was followed by a heartfelt applause.

Mr. Lincoln was then conducted to the assembly chamber, where he was addressed by the Speaker, to whom Mr. Lincoln replied as follows:

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen: I have just enjoyed the honor of a reception by the other branch of this Legislature. I return to you and thank you for the reception which the people of New Jersey have given, through their chosen representatives, to me, as, for the time being, the representative of the majesty of the people of the United States. I appropriate to myself very little of the demonstrations of respect with which I have been greeted. I think little should be given to any man, but that it should be a manifestation of adherence to the Union and Constitution. I understand myself to be received here by the representatives of the people of New Jersey, a majority of whom differ in opinion from those with whom I have acted. This manifestation is therefore to be received by me as expressing their devotion to the Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people.

You, Mr. Speaker, have well said this is a time when the bravest look with doubt and awe upon the aspect presented by our national affairs. Under the circumstances you will readily see why I should not speak in detail of the course I shall deem it best to pursue. It is proper I should avail myself of all the information and of all the time at my command, in order that when the time arrives that I must speak officially, I shall be able to take the ground which I deem the best and safest, and from which I may have no occasion to swerve. I shall endeavor to take the ground that I deem most just to the North, the East, the West, the South, and the whole country. I shall take it, I hope, in good temper, certainly with no malice toward any section. I shall do all that may be in my power to promote a peaceful settlement of all our difficulties.

The man does not live who is more devoted to peace than I am, (cheers) or who would do more to preserve it; but it may be necessary to put the floor down firmly. (Here the crowd broke out with cheers so loud and long that it was impossible to hear Mr. Lincoln's voice.) And if I do my duty and do it right, you will sustain me, will you not? (Loud cheers and cries of "Yes, yes, we will.") Received as I am by the members of the Legislature, a majority of whom do not believe with me in political sentiments, I trust that I may have their assistance in piloting the Ship of State through this voyage, surrounded by perils as it is; for if it should suffer from an attack now, there will be no pilot over needed for another voyage. Gentlemen, I have already spoken longer than I intended, and must crave leave to stop here.

Mr. Lincoln was then escorted to the Trenton House by a procession, where he spoke briefly to the crowd outside. A splendid collation was given.

The train left at half-past 2 o'clock for Philadelphia, under the charge of a committee from that city.

### RECEPTION AT PHILADELPHIA.

*Philadelphia, 21st.* The train with Mr. Lincoln and suite arrived at Kensington at 4 o'clock, and proceeded to take the carriages assigned to them. Mr. Lincoln's barouche being conspicuous by the gay plumage with which the four white horses were ornamented. The procession consisted of mounted police, a cavalcade of citizens of all descriptions and politics, the Pennsylvania Dragoons, the Chairman of the committee, the Presidents of the City Councils, the committees of the New Jersey and Pennsylvania Legislatures, &c. About 100,000 people lined the streets along the route of the procession.

Mr. Lincoln, on his arrival at the Continental Hotel, was conducted to the balcony and introduced to the Mayor. The noisy multitude below greeted his appearance with wholesome cheering. Both the Mayor's welcome and Mr. Lincoln's reply were unheard except by those in the immediate vicinity. Mr. Lincoln displayed great earnestness in his delivery, which caused the mass to

respond to his patriotic views in deafening applause. Mr. Lincoln said:

"Mr. Mayor and fellow citizens of Philadelphia—I appear before you to make no lengthy speech, but to thank you for this reception. The reception you have given me tonight is not to me, the man, the individual, but to the man who temporarily represents, or should represent, the majority of the nation. (Cheers.) It is true, as your worthy Mayor has said, that there is anxiety among the citizens of the United States at this time.

I deem it a happy circumstance that the dissatisfied portion of our citizens do not point us to anything in which they are being injured, or are about to be injured, for which reason I have felt all the while justified in concluding that the crisis, the panic, the anxiety of the country at this time, is artificial. If there be those who differ with me on this subject, they have not pointed out the substantial difficulty that exists. I do not mean to say that an artificial panic may not do considerable harm; that it has done such I do not deny. The hope that has been expressed by your Mayor that I may be able to restore peace, harmony and prosperity to the country, is most worthy of him, and most happy indeed will I be if I shall be able to verify the fulfillment of the hope. (Tremendous cheers.)

I promise you in all sincerity, that I bring to the work a sincere heart; whether I will bring a hand equal to that heart, will be for future times to determine. It were useless to speak of details and plans now. I shall speak officially next Monday week, and it would be useless for me to do so now. When I do speak, I shall take such grounds as I deem best calculated to restore harmony and prosperity to this country, and tend to perpetuate the nation and the liberties of these States and these people. Your worthy Mayor has expressed a wish, in which I join with him, that it were convenient for me to remain in your city long enough to consult with your merchants and manufacturers, or, as it were, to listen to those breathings arising within the consecrated walls wherein the Constitution of the United States, and I will add the Declaration of Independence, were originally framed and adopted. (Enthusiastic applause.)

I assure you and your Mayor, I hope upon this occasion and upon all occasions during my life I shall do nothing inconsistent with the teachings of these holy and sacred walls. All my political warfare has been in favor of the teachings that came forth from these sacred walls. May my right hand forget its cunning and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I prove false to these teachings. Fellow-citizens, I have addressed you longer than I expected to do, and now allow me to bid you good night.

Mr. Lincoln then retired, and subsequently held a levee.

The hotel is densely crowded this evening, and there is a vast crowd without. Mr. Lincoln stands at the head of the staircase, continually bowing to the hundreds that are passing him every five minutes. Occasionally there is a wild hurrah given for "Uncle Abe."

*Philadelphia, 22d.* The ceremony of raising the flag over Independence Hall by Mr. Lincoln, this forenoon, was attended by an immense crowd, and the scene was quite impressive.

Mr. Lincoln was escorted to the Hall at 7 o'clock, where he was received and welcomed by Theodore Cuyler. Mr. Lincoln in reply said:

I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing in the place where were collected the wisdom and patriotism from which sprung the institutions under which we live. You have kindly suggested that in my hands is the task of restoring peace to the present distracted condition of the country. I can say in return that all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn from the sentiments originated in and given to the world from this hall. I never had a political feeling that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. I have often pondered over the dangers incurred by the men who assembled here and framed and adopted the Declaration of Independence. I have pondered over the toils endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that has kept this confederacy so long together.

It was not the mere matter of the separation of the colonies from the mother land, but it was that sentiment in the Declaration which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but hope to the world for all future time. (Applause.) It was that which gave promise that in due time the weights would be lifted from the shoulders of all men. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved upon that basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help save it. If it cannot be saved upon that principle it will be truly awful. But if this country cannot be saved with-



out giving up that principle, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it. (Applause.)

Now in my view of the present aspect of affairs, there is no need of bloodshed for war—no necessity for it. I am not in favor of such a course, and I may say in advance there will be no bloodshed unless forced upon the government, and then it will be compelled to act in self-defence. (Applause.) I did not expect to be called upon to say a word when I came here. I supposed it was merely to do something toward raising a flag. (Cries of "no," "no.") I have said nothing that I am not willing to live and die by.

Mr. Lincoln concluded amid great applause. A procession was then formed which moved directly to the platform in front of the State House. When Mr. Lincoln appeared there was tremendous cheering by the crowd.

Mr. Benton, of the City Council, in a brief address requested Mr. Lincoln to raise the flag, to which the latter cheerfully responded, briefly alluding to the original flag of thirteen stars, the number of which had increased as time rolled on, and we had become a powerful and happy people, each star adding to our prosperity. Our future, said he, is in the hands of the people. It was on such occasions as this that we could reason together and reaffirm our devotion to the country and to the principles of the Declaration of Independence. Let us make up our minds that whenever we do put a new star upon our banner it shall be a fixed one, never to be dimmed by the orrors of war, but brightened by contentment, prosperity and peace. Let us go on and extend the area of our usefulness, and star upon star, until their light shines over five hundred millions of free and happy people.

Rev. Mr. Clark invoked divine grace, the spectators uncovering.

The flag, which was rolled up in man-of-war style, was then adjusted, a signal was fired, and amid the most excited enthusiasm the President set hoisted the national ensign, and it floated it boldly on the breeze. Cheers followed cheer until hoarseness prevented their continuance.

After the conclusion of the ceremonies, Mr. Lincoln returned to his hotel, followed by an excited crowd. After breakfast he repaired to the depot of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

*Elizabethtown, Pa., 22d.* Mr. Lincoln left West Philadelphia at 9.30 this morning. At Downingtown he spoke briefly in response to the cheers of a crowd. At every stopping place a crowd was assembled.

At Lancaster a salute of 34 guns announced the arrival of the Presidential train. Mr. Lincoln was conducted to the Caldwell House. In reply to the dress of welcome he said he did not appear to make a speech. It is well known, said he, that where a man speaks to be understood—the more

he says one thing, the more his adversaries will contend that he meant something else.

#### RECEPTION AT HARRISBURG.

*Harrisburg, Pa., Feb. 22.* The Presidential train arrived at 2 o'clock, and was received with a salute and the cheers of an immense multitude that had gathered at the depot. Mr. Lincoln was escorted by the military to the Jones House, where he was introduced to a crowd of some 500 people by Governor Curtin, who welcomed him to the capital of the State, saying that in case of conciliation fails, they would be ready to aid by men and money in maintaining the Constitution.

Mr. Lincoln returned thanks for his reception, and referring to the troubles of the country, trusted a resort to arms would never become necessary. To avert that calamity we must be sustained by the people. He brought an earnest heart to the work, and it should be no fault of his if he failed.

The President elect then proceeded to the Capitol, where he was welcomed by the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House.

Mr. Lincoln responded as follows:

I appear before you only to make a very few brief remarks in response to what has been said to me. I thank you most sincerely for this reception, and for the generous words in which support has been promised me upon this occasion. I thank your great Commonwealth for the overwhelming support your Commonwealth gave, not to me, but the cause I think a just one in the late election. (Applause.) Allusion has been made to the fact, the interesting fact perhaps we should say, that I for the first time appear at the Capital of the great State of Pennsylvania upon the birthday of the Father of his Country.

In connection with that beloved anniversary, connected with the history of this country, I have already gone through one interesting scene this morning in the ceremonies at Philadelphia. Under the kind conduct of gentlemen there, I was for the first time allowed the privilege of standing in old Independence Hall, (enthusiastic applause,) to have a few words addressed to me there, opening up to me an opportunity of expressing much regret that I had not more time to express something of my own feelings excited by the occasion, somewhat to harmonize and give shape to the feelings that had been really the feelings of my whole life. Besides this, our friends there had provided a magnificent flag of the country, and so arranged that I was given the honor of raising it to the head of the staff, (applause,) and when it

went up I was pleased that it went to its place by the strength of my own feeble arm.

When, according to the arrangement, the cord was pulled and it flaunted gloriously to the wind without an accident in the light of the glowing sunshine of the morning, I could not help hoping there was in the entire success of the beautiful ceremony something of an omen of what is to come. (Loud applause.) Nor could I help feeling then, as I often have felt, that in the whole of that proceeding I was a very humble instrument. I had not provided the flag, I had not made the arrangement for elevating it to its place, and I had applied but a very small portion of my feeble strength in raising it; in the whole transaction I was in the hands of the people who had arranged it, and if I can have the same generous cooperation of the people of this nation, I think the flag of our country may yet be flaunting gloriously. (Enthusiastic cheering.)

I recur for a moment to some words uttered at the hotel in regard to what has been said about the military support the General Government may expect from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in a proper emergency. To guard against any possible mistake do I recur to this. It is not with any pleasure that I contemplate the possibility that any necessity may arise in this country for the use of the military arm. (Applause.) While

I am exceedingly glad to see manifestations upon your streets of your military force here, and exceedingly gratified at your promise to use that force upon proper emergency, yet, while I make these acknowledgements, I desire to repeat, in order to preclude any possible misconception, that I do most sincerely hope that we shall have no use for them; (loud applause) that it will never become their duty to shed blood, and most especially, never to shed fraternal blood.

I promise that in so far as I may have wisdom to direct, if so painful a result shall be brought about, it shall be through no fault of mine. (Cheers.)

Allusion has also been made by one of your honored speakers to some remarks recently made by me at Pittsburg, in regard to what I supposed to be the especial interest of this great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I now wish only to say in regard to that matter, that the few remarks which I uttered on that occasion were rather carefully worded. I took pains that it should be so. I have seen no occasion since to add to them or subtract from them. I leave them precisely as they stand (applause), adding only now, that I am pleased to have an expression from you, gentlemen of Pennsylvania, that they are satisfactory to you. And now, gentlemen of the Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, allow me again to return to you my sincere thanks.

Mr. Speaker Palmer then delivered an oration appropriate today, upon Washington, which was enthusiastically received.

Mr. Lincoln retired to his hotel and the assemblage dispersed. The remainder of the afternoon and evening was passed quietly by Mr. Lincoln in receiving a few friends.

## EVENING TRANSCRIPT.

SATURDAY EVENING, FEB. 23, 1861.

BOSTON DAILY

# LATEST NEWS

Midnight Dispatches.

## MOVEMENTS OF THE PRESIDENT.

### Mr. Lincoln's Arrival in Trenton.

Trenton, N. J., Feb. 21.

The special train arrived at 12 o'clock. There was immense crowd at the depot. Mayor Mills extended a welcome, and introduced Mr. Lincoln to the members of the city government. The party was then taken in carriages to the State House, under escort of 100 Hussars of the City Blues of Patterson, and the German Rifles of Trenton. Having been introduced to the Senate, the President thereof welcomed Mr. Lincoln, who replied as follows:

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Senate of the State of New Jersey.—I am very grateful to you for the honorable reception of which I have been the object. I cannot but remember the place that New Jersey holds in our early history. In the early Revolutionary struggle, few of the States among the Old Thirteen had more of the battle fields within their limits than old New Jersey. May I be permitted, on this occasion, I mention that, away back in my childhood, the earliest day of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, such as one as few of the younger members have ever seen—Weems' Life of Washington. I remember that in all accounts then given of the battle fields and struggles for the liberty of the country, none fixed their eyes upon my imagination as the struggle here at Trenton. The crossing of the river—the contest with the Hessians—the great hardships endured at that time, all fixed themselves upon my memory, more than any single Revolutionary event, and you all know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than any other, I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common in what these men struggled for. I am exceedingly anxious that that thing which they then struggled for—that something more than national independence—that something which held out a great promise to all the people of the world for all time to come—I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution, and the Liberties of the People shall be perpetuated, in accordance with the original ideas for which that struggle was made; and, I shall be most happy indeed, if I shall be an humble instrument, in the hands of the Almighty, and of this, his almost chosen people, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle. You give me this reception, as I understand, without distinction of party. I learn that this body is composed of a majority of gentlemen who, in the exercise of their best judgment in the choice of a Chief Magistrate, did not think I was the man. I understand, nevertheless, that they come forward here to greet me as the constitutional President of the United States as citizens of the United States who, for the time being is the representative man of the nation—united by a purpose to perpetuate the Union and the Liberties of the People. As such I accept this reception more gratefully than I could do, did I know it was tendered me as an individual.

His speech was followed by heartfelt applause.

Mr. Lincoln was then conducted to the Assembly Chamber. The Speaker addressed him appropriately, when Mr. Lincoln replied as follows.

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen—I have just enjoyed the honor of a reception by the other branch of this Legislature. I return to you and them my thanks for the reception which the people of New Jersey have given me through their chosen representatives. As for the time being the representative of the majority of the people of the United States, I appropriate to myself very little of the demonstrations of re-

spect with which I have been greeted. I think little should be given to any man, but that it should be a manifestation of adherence to the Union and the Constitution. I understand myself to be received here by the people of New Jersey, a majority of whom differ in opinion from those with whom I have acted. This manifestation is, therefore, to be regarded as expressing their devotion to the Union, the Constitution, and the liberty of the people. You, Mr. Speaker, have said, and this is the time when the bravest and wisest look with doubt and are upon this aspect presented of national affairs. Under those circumstances, I should not speak in haste.

Of course I shall deem it best to pursue. It is proper I should avail myself of all the information, and at the time at my command, in order that when the time arrives in which I must speak officially, I shall be able to take the ground which I deem the best and safest, and from which I may have no occasion to swerve. I shall endeavor to take the ground I deem most just to the North, the East, the South, and the West; and the whole country will take it, I hope, in good temper. I shall do all that may be in my power to promote a peaceful settlement of all our difficulties. The man does not live who is more devoted to peace than I am—none who would do more to preserve it; but it may be necessary to put the foot down firmly—[here the audience broke into cheers so loud and long, that for some moments it was impossible to hear Mr. L.'s voice]—and if I do my duty, and do right, you will sustain me, will you not? [L. and cheers and cries of "Yes!" "Yes!" "We will!"] Received, as I am, by members of a Legislature, the majority of whom do not agree with me in political sentiments, I trust I may have their assistance in piloting the Ship of State through this voyage, surrounded by perils as it is; for if it should suffer from the attack now, there will be no pilot ever needed for another voyage. Gentlemen, I have already spoken longer than I intended, and must beg leave to stop.

The procession moved to the Trenton House, where Mr. Lincoln spoke briefly to the crowd outside. A splendid collation was given.

The train left at half-past-two o'clock for Philadelphia, in charge of the committee from that city. It is thought there were 20,000 persons present.

### Arrival in Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 21—10:15 P. M.

The train with Mr. Lincoln and suite, arrived at Kensington at 1 o'clock. They were escorted by carriages, Mr. Lincoln's bareheaded being conspicuous, by the gay plumage and four white horses. The procession consisted of mounted police, a cavalcade of citizens of all descriptions of politics, and the Pennsylvania Dragoons. They were hailed everywhere with patriotic emblems and manifestations. About 100,000 people were gathered along the line of march.

Mr. Lincoln, on arriving at the Continental Hotel, was conducted to the balcony and introduced to the Mayor. The noisy multitude below greeted his appearance with hearty cheers. Both the Mayor's welcome and his reply were unheard, excepting by those in the immediate vicinity. Mr. Lincoln displayed great earnestness in delivery of his remarks, which caused the mass to reflect his patriotic views in deafening applause. Mr. Lincoln spoke as follows.

Mr. Mayor, and citizens of Philadelphia.—I appear before you to make no lengthy speech, but to thank you for this reception. The reception you have given me to-night, is not to me—the man, the individual—but to the man who temporarily represents, or should represent, the majority of the nation. [Cheers.] It is time, as your worthy Mayor has said, that there is anxiety among the citizens of the United States at this time. I deem it a happy circumstance that the distinguished portion of our fellow-citizens, do not point us to anything in which they are being injured, or about to be injured, for which reason I have not all

the while justified in concluding that the crisis, the panic, and the anxiety of the country at this time is artificial. If there be those who differ with me on this subject, they have not pointed at the substantial difficulty that exists. I do not mean to say that an artificial panic may not do considerable harm. That it has done so I do not deny.

The hope that has been expressed by your Mayor, that I may be enabled to restore peace, harmony and prosperity to the country, is most worthy of him, and most happy will be it I shall be able to gratify and realize the hope.—(Tremendous cheering.) I promise you, in all sincerity, that I bring to the work a sincere heart. Whether I will bring a head equal to that heart, will be for the future to determine. It were useless to speak of details and plans now. I shall speak officially on next Monday week. When I do speak, I shall take such grounds as I deem best calculated to restore harmony and prosperity to the country, and tend to the perpetuity of the nation and the liberty of these States and the people.

Your worthy Mayor has expressed the wish, in which I join with him, that I wish it was convenient for me to remain in your city long enough to consult with your merchants and manufacturers, or, as it were, to listen to those breathings rising within the consecrated walls, wherein the Constitution of the United States, and, I will add the Declaration of Independence, were originally framed and adopted. [Enthusiastic applause.] May my right hand forget its cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prove false to those teachings. And now allow me to bid you good night.

He then retired, and, it is supposed, subsequently held a levee.



## REPEATS LINCOLN'S SPEECH AT TRENTON

Words of Then President-Elect,  
Spoken Fifty-Six Years Ago  
Today, Heard in Senate.

### RECALLS STRUGGLE FOR LIBERTY

*Staff Correspondence.*

TRENTON, Feb. 21.—Fifty-six years ago today Abraham Lincoln, then President-elect, attended the session of the New Jersey Senate and House. The fact was recalled by Senator Stevens, who read in the Senate today the address delivered by Mr. Lincoln, and had it spread in full upon the Senate journal. The record of the Senate of 1861 contains only a brief reference to President Lincoln's visit, and gave no part of his address.

At the time of Lincoln's visit Edmund Perry of Hunterdon welcomed the President-elect, who responded as follows:

"I am very grateful to you for the honorable reception of which I have been the object. I cannot but remember the place that New Jersey holds in our early history. In the Revolutionary struggle few of the states among the old thirteen had more of the battlefields of the country within their limits than New Jersey. My I be pardoned if, upon this occasion, I mention that away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, such a one as few of the younger members have ever seen, 'Weems's Life of Washington.'"

"I remember all the accounts there given of the battlefields and struggles for the liberties of the country, and none fixed themselves upon my imagination so deeply as the struggle here at Trenton, N. J. The crossing of the river, the contest with the Hessians, the great hardships endured at that time, all fixed themselves on my memory more than any single Revolutionary event; and you all know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than any others."

"I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that these men struggled for. I am exceedingly anxious that that thing—that something even more than national independence, that something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world to all time to come—I am exceedingly anxious that this union, the Constitution and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made, and I shall be most happy indeed if I shall be an humble instrument in the hand of the Almighty, and of this, his almost chosen people, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle."

"You give me this reception, as I understand, without distinction of party. I learn that this body is composed of a majority of gentlemen who, in the exercise of their best judgment in the choice of a chief magistrate, did not think I was the man. I understand, nevertheless, that they came forward here to greet me as the constitutionally elected President of the United States—as citizens of the United States—to meet the man who, for the time being, is the representative of the majority of the nation, united by the single purpose to perpetuate the Constitution and the liberties of the people. As such I accept this reception more gratefully than I could do did I believe it were tendered to me as an individual."

*Newark News 2/21/17*



# Lincoln's Historic Visit Here 87 Years Ago Was Marked by Somber Tone of Utterances

## Crowds Jammed Streets To Greet President-Elect

Eighty-seven years ago, Abraham Lincoln, faced with the gravest responsibility of his life, stopped off in Trenton on his way to the inauguration at Washington. The date was February 21, 1861. Barely a week before, he had celebrated his birthday amidst the ominous gloom of secession.

There was ample evidence that his thoughts were filled with the tremendous duties he was about to undertake, for twice during his visit here he spoke of things to come. In one of his addresses there were phrases which carried a marked resemblance with passages in the famous Gettysburg Address.

Lincoln arrived at the Trenton station (then located at State and Canal Streets) accompanied by Governor Olden and a joint committee of the Legislature. It was

noon when the train pulled in and a large throng was on hand to greet him.

The party moved immediately to the Tremont House, still at the same location, where Mayor Franklin S. Mills was waiting to receive Lincoln. The Mayor said a few appropriate words and Lincoln, in turn, expressed his pride and pleasure in visiting the historic city.

### Crowds Jammed Route

The trip to the State House was made through almost impassable thousands, with a cavalcade of horsemen and the Trenton Rifles at the head to clear the way. The President-elect rode in a barouche, followed by the Mayor, members of Common Council and citizens.

At the State House Lincoln went directly to the Senate chamber where he was introduced to President Perry and the other Senators. The gaunt man from Illinois, carrying with him his stove-pipe hat, listened attentively to a formal welcome and then arose to utter

## Termed Self Humble Instrument In Hands Of Almighty

the words that had been weighing heavily on his heart.

In his opening lines he injected a note of boyhood memories and spoke as follows:

"May I be pardoned if, upon this occasion, I mention that away back in childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, such a one as few of the younger members have ever seen, Weem's Life of Washington. I remember all the accounts then given of the battlefields and struggles for liberties of the country and none fixed themselves upon my imagination so deeply as the struggle here in Trenton, New Jersey—the crossing of the river; the contest with the Hessians; the great hardships endured at that time, all fixed themselves on my memory more than any single Revolutionary event."

### 'Humble Instrument'

At this point he began to weave into his address the battle of the past and the contests to come:

"And you all know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than others. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that these men struggled for; that something even more than national independence; that something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world for all time to come. I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made, and I shall be most happy indeed if I shall be a humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty for perpetuating the object of that great struggle."

A few more words and he finished, amid resounding applause. He then moved over to the House of Assembly where he was greeted by President Teese and again, reminding of the struggle that was awaiting him in Washington, spoke as follows:

"I shall do all that may be in my power to promote a peaceful



## Washington's Birthday

By ABRAHAM LINCOLN

MAY I be pardoned if, upon this in my childhood, the earliest hold of a small book, such a one as seen—Weems's *Life of Washington*. I of the battle-fields and struggles for fixed themselves upon my imagination ton, New Jersey. The crossing of the the great hardships endured at that time, all fixed themselves on my memory more than any single Revolutionary event; and you all know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than any others. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that these men struggled for. I am exceedingly anxious that that thing—that something even more than national independence, that something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world to all time to come—I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made; and I shall be most happy indeed if I shall be a humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty, and of this his almost chosen people, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle.

## February.



125-76

### Lincoln in 1861.

[Gath in The San Francisco Chronicle.]

I had been some time in Trenton before the Presidential train came along, and the Mayor of the town, who was a common, smug kind of man conferred with me about the speech he ought to make, and finally a speech was gotten up before Lincoln came.

We went to the depot somewhere near noon, and not more than half a dozen to a dozen people, as I remember, were admitted to the car platforms. The depot consisted of a kind of whitewashed hencoop, made of slat work, with the idea of preventing anybody from getting on the platform unless he paid his fare. The penurionsness of railroad travel between Washington and New York in those days no man can now conceive; the complete captivity of the travelling public to petty incidental corporations which had no national spirit, and were almost as rebellious as the States of the South. Inside of this hencoop depot, in the middle of the town of Trenton, I waited till the little low-pitched cars and mean-looking locomotive whistled and snorted their way in.

There stepped out of the car among the first—I think, indeed, he was the second man—a tall, almost noble looking personage, dressed in a new suit of black broadcloth, with a high stove-pipe silk hat, and instead of the man-moukey he had been advertised to be, there were the proportions and accoutrements of a gentleman, and turning to the Jersey officials, with a voice deep and dignified, he said, as if anticipating that he was to be made a fool-show of:

“Now, let us be as quiet as it is possible, if you please.”

I then felt that Lincoln had been slandered by the Douglas element in the campaign, and having seen Douglas to a sufficiency, I saw that the man who beat him was his superior in temperance, modesty and sensibility.

It took but a minute or two for the Mayor

to get off his speech, and perhaps he cut it out altogether—it is all hazy now—and then we took carriages to go to the State House, on the banks of the Delaware River, distant, perhaps, three-quarters of a mile. I had the third or fourth carriage after Lincoln—I forget with whom—and as we passed through the streets the Irish population set up loud yells of laughter, not exactly knowing which man was “Old Abe,” but they seemed to have faith that the baboon was somewhere around. Anecdotes of all kinds had been told on Lincoln, and he was made to appear a fantastic, preposterous person.

I obtained a seat in the Senate chamber, and with small delay the President-elect was brought up to make a speech. Up to that time he had said nothing during his long journey from Springfield to Trenton touching upon the possibilities of a conflict. With my usual news luck I arrived the first moment he was to be definite.

He stood forth, the same modest, yet kind-eyed man, but with a confidence a little back of the surface, which showed that he was a man of affairs and used to the large shocks of the populace and the politicians. There seemed nothing ungainly in his appearance, except that he was of a good, fine height and his arms were long, and every feature in his face had its separate expression, and over all was a fatherly look.

After paying his respects and thanks to the audience, which was not probably over four hundred to five hundred people, though of this I am am not sure, as I am depending wholly upon the impression in the memory, he said:

“We do not know that there will be any trouble; I hope not. It may be necessary to put the foot down firm.”

When he got to this point the entire audience arose and stormed the occasion with shouts and cheers and yells and shrieks, in which you could hear not only the resolution of battle, but the belief that there was now going to be a fight. The South had bluffed so long against the successful Republican party; this party was resolved on a war, and did not mean to wait any time about taking up the gage of battle.



